MUSICK *the Delight of the Sons of Men.*

4473.f.11.
1-13.

A SERMON

PREACHED at the

Cathedral Church

OF

HEREFORD,

AT THE

Anniverſary Meeting

Of the THREE CHOIRS,

Gloceſter, Worceſter, Hereford,

SEPTEMBER 7. 1726.

By THO. BISSE, D.D.
Chancellor of the ſaid CHURCH.

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M.T.

Worcester Music Meeting.—On Wednesday the triennial meeting of the Worcester, Glocester, and Hereford Choirs was held at Worcester for the hundred-and-first successive years, under many excellent and judicious improvements, with a very superior instrumental band, led by Mr. Cramer. The vocal performers, of the first talent the country could boast of, were engaged. In the evening there was a concert at the College-hall, which was very numerously attended: numbers were waiting before the doors were opened. The weather was remarkably fine, that many ladies walked considerable distances without any covering over their heads, some from out of the city. Madame Ronzi de Begnis made her first appearance, and was loudly applauded; she was encored in the Cavatina, "Di Piacer," by Rossini. The other vocal performers were—Mrs. Salmon, Miss Stephens, Miss Travis, Mr. Braham, Mr. Vaughan, and Mr. W. Knyvett.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

Dr. *CROFT.*

SIR,

I Make you a Preſent of this Diſcourſe, which partly belongs to you, as the Maſter of the Song *in our* Iſrael. *Not but I have many reaſons to make you this compliment; as long acquaintance and friendſhip, and a ſort of fraternal relation, commenced upon our Proceeding together in our reſpective Degrees at the laſt Public* Act: *but the chief reaſon is my eſteem for your merit; who, by joining to an happy genius, conſtant ſtudy and application, have equal'd any of your Predeceſſors.* Tallis, Bird, Gibbons. Child, Blow, Purcel, *great names in the Profeſſion,*

with whom I ſhould join Aldrich, *did he not ſtand in an higher Claſs: all theſe, if living, would readily admit* Croft *upon their Roll. Theſe Maſters in Muſick, as all other Authors in their kind, have ſeverally their own Stiles, each different, yet all excellent: And you have yours, which is not inferior to any.*

But ſince you have made ſuch an advance even by the middle or half way of life, what may we expect, if by God's bleſſing you compleat your threeſcore years and ten? *The common wiſh of your Friends, which are many, engaged to you by your great merit, made greater by an equal modeſty. To that wiſh I will add my requeſt to you, not to continue too hard a ſtudent; that ſo the preſent age may long enjoy you in perſon, as poſterity will in your works.*

I remain,

SIR,

Your moſt aſſured Friend,

And humble Servant,

THO. BISSE.

ECCLES. II. 8.

I gat me men-ſingers and women-ſingers, and the delights of the ſons of men, as muſical inſtruments, and that of all ſorts.

IT pleaſed the Allwiſe Creator, that as he had made this inferior World for the uſe and enjoyment of men, ſo the wiſeſt of men ſhould make his experiments upon the various happineſs it affords; and to the end that all men, inferior in wiſdom to judge, or wealth to procure, might be convinced, terreſtrial happineſs was not their ultimate, but that they were deſigned for better things than theſe, he has by God's direction written

upon theſe this maxim or motto, *all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit.* Yet he had procured to himſelf all things that are thought magnificent or pleaſurable. Thus he enumerates them: *I made me great works, I builded me houſes, I planted me vineyards, I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees. I got me ſervants and maidens, and had ſervants born in my houſe: alſo I had great poſſeſſions of great and ſmall cattle, above all that were in Jeruſalem before me. I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of kings, and of the provinces:* and then as the cloſe and crown of all, *I got me men-ſingers and women-ſingers, and the delights of the ſons of men, as muſical inſtruments, and that of all ſorts.*

Tho' this laſt kind of happineſs be included in the ſame verdict with the foregoing, and ſigned with the ſame Inſcription, *viz. vanity and vexation*; and if indulged or extended beyond its end, either in our opinion or enjoyment, will prove no better; yet this uſe may be made of the liſt or enumeration of human enjoyments as here ſet down, that Muſick is the chief, that this is emphatically and above

above the reſt, *the delight of the ſons of men.*

'Tis true; theſe things, which *Solomon* had got, and which moſt kings have ever endeavour'd to get to themſelves, the might and majeſty of caſtles and fortreſſes, *thoſe mighty works*; the multitude and magnificence of palaces built with all the orders and ornaments of architecture; the formation of gardens, laid out with variety of proſpects and plantations; the intermixture of *pools* or baſons *of water*, communicating (in the modern form and phraſe) by canals, caſcades and artificial fountains; the ſplendor of the royal retinue, the numerous attendance and rich attire of the Court, great incomes into the treaſury, either from the poſſeſſions of land, or the aids of Subjects, and of tributary States and Provinces; all theſe things muſt have their great delights, and I believe the greater, becauſe few but kings and princes can have them. As they affect the eyes of beholders, ſo more the eyes and hearts of the poſſeſſors, to ſee and think, that what they have wrought or enjoy, fills the upper part of the world with envy, and the inferior with admiration. Notwithſtanding Muſick tranſcends them all; gives a more direct and delightful impreſſion to the Soul; and was ordained by God for *the delight*

of the ſons of men, to be above all ſenſible enjoyments, the principal entertainment in human life.

The proof of this ſhall be the buſineſs of my preſent undertaking: and tho' what I ſhall advance upon this ſubject, which is uncommon, may ſeem alſo uncommon and paradoxical in the propoſal; yet bear with me, whilſt I unfold more fully my meditations thereon.

The muſick in the Text, comprehends both vocal and inſtrumental: and as the inſtrumental is *of all ſorts*, ſo is the vocal. *I gat me men-ſingers and women-ſingers*; the former for the depth and ſtrength, the latter for the elevation and ſweetneſs of voice.

Now that muſick in both kinds, or in general, was ordained for the delight of mankind, to be to them the chief of all ſenſible enjoyments, let me offer this general reaſon; becauſe the two principal organs or faculties in the make of man, ſeem chiefly framed for the performance, and for the reception and conveyance of muſick to us. Theſe are the hand and the ear; the hand the inſtrumental organ to perform; the ear to receive, form and convey muſick to the Soul. Both theſe I preſume to affirm, ſeem framed principally for muſick, as deſigned to be the ſuperlative delight of the ſons of men.

Firſt,

Firſt, Let us contemplate, but more briefly, that wondrous inſtrument the hand.

Not that this ſacred place will permit us to condeſcend to call in Anatomy to take it aſunder, to ſhew the multiplicity of the bones, the aptitude of the joynts, or by what muſcles they are turn'd, with what fibres ſtrung; though ſuch a view might juſtly raiſe a ſacred admiration and thankſgiving to the Artificer that framed it; we will not contemplate now the prodigy of its make, but the variety and ſubordination of its uſes in life. Now I ſay, that among and above all thoſe uſes the performance of Muſick ſeems the principal and the chief reaſon of its ſo admirable formation; and that the other various uſes of the hand are all but ſecondary to this.

For tho' I grant, and that with thankfulneſs, that the hand is the moſt ſerviceable member of the body in the operations of common life; tho' it be the ground of all manual occupations, which are therefore called *manual*; tho' it be ſo expert in all varieties of workmanſhip, and even wonderful in the delicacies of mechaniſm; tho' it more magnifies itſelf in the nobler arts of Statuary and Painting, which give a ſort of life to what is inanimate; and laſt of all, in handling *the pen of the writer*,

writer, which conveys a perpetuity to what is periſhable; yet none of theſe ſeems to be its maſter-work: and tho' doubtleſs the hand was made for theſe uſes, and many others perhaps not yet invented, yet was it not for any of theſe *ſo wonderfully made*. For why? Moſt of theſe, if we reflect, may be performed by the hand when maimed or defective, and alſo when deprived of or without its correſpondent. Again, in the performance moſt of them require rather ſteddineſs and ſlowneſs, than variety or ſwiftneſs of motion in the hand. Whereas, harmony demands and draws forth all the wonders of its compoſition; requiring not only that it be ſound and entire in every part, in every joint and ſinew, but alſo that the correſpondent hand be in the ſame perfection; and that being both thus compleat, they act together in perfect correſpondence. But how act? why, by moving, or rather flying to and fro, through an infinite multiplicity and harmonious combination of ſounds, without error, without interfering, and this in a moment, and every moment ſwifter than the twinkling of an eye, or the flight of imagination; an operation, which though ſo common in fact, and familiar to our ſenſe, ought to be a ſort of miracle to our thought.

Was

Was it not for this that the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, though a great king and a mighty warrior above all the kings of *Iſrael*, yet beſpeaks the lute and harp as *his glory*, before either the Scepter or the Spear? Might it not be for this, that the moſt emphatical imprecation upon his forgetfulneſs of *Sion* was, that his *right hand might forget her cunning?* Indeed, when I have heard the performances upon ſome *muſical inſtrument of God*, as awakened by the hand of a *David*, I could not but conclude, yea, cry out, ſurely the hand was made for harmony: and theſe reaſons, which after-reflection ſuggeſted and are now produced, if duly attended to, may induce others to excuſe the exclamation, if not to join in the concluſion.

But let us more largely contemplate,

Secondly, The other organical faculty or inſtrument, the ear.

Now as all confeſs, that the ear was made for hearing; ſo I can more boldly affirm, that it was ſo wonderfully made for harmony. Wonderfully it is made; ſo that when the eye would pry into the ſecrets of this its neighbour ſenſory, it cannot be ſatisfied with ſeeing: when it views the avenues, the circular *apparatus* and appendages placed without for the collection of ſounds, and within the *tympanum* with

with the inſtruments annexed, and the inimitable labyrinths and vaults formed for their admiſſion, communication and correction, it is apt to ſuggeſt that the ear is one, and that the firſt among the muſical inſtruments of God.

The general uſe of the ear, beſides the inferior uſes of it in common to us with the brute creatures, beaſts, birds, and creeping things, is cheifly the mutual communication of our thoughts, minds and affections by ſpeech or voice: Inſomuch, that if any accidental deafneſs hath barr'd up this door, all correſpondence with men is at an end; or, if by natural infelicity a man be born deaf, he is of conſequence dumb, and no correſpondence with others can be begun. But by the hearing and conveyance of the ear, and the conſequential uſe and miniſtry of the tongue, all wiſdom wrapt up in ſciences and arts, all skill in languages, are taught and propagated through the world; all councils held, all controverſies debated, all commerce managed, all affairs great and ſmall are tranſacted among the ſons of men. But may not all this be acquired, accompliſhed or enjoyed without the aids and advantages of harmony? If ſo, where then is the ſuperior uſefulneſs or intent of harmony? I anſwer, it was ordained by our Maker, not ſo much for the uſe as the delight of

man-

mankind: and for this end was the ear ſo curiouſly wrought and faſhioned, not barely to hear, but chiefly to enjoy.

For we find in ſome few who hear well and clearly as others, that there is found no complacency in, nor ſenſations of harmony; profeſſing themſelves as utter ſtrangers to the meaning of muſick, as the deaf man is to the notion of ſounds: unhappy perſons in my calculation of happineſs, who by this connatural ſecondary ſpecies of deafneſs are as much cut off from this univerſal delight of men, as the aged are by decay; to whom neither *David*, nor his Court, nor his Choir could yield any delight, but may as juſtly complain as *Barzillai* did, *Can I hear the voice of ſinging-men and ſinging-women?* Yes theſe can hear; but therein more unhappy than the aged, becauſe they hear muſick not with delight, but rather diſſatisfaction. But this inſenſibility which is naturally attended with diſlike, is rare and permitted in ſome few inſtances by our Maker, to whom it is often made up in other perfections; this defect I ſay, if it may be ſo called, is permitted in ſome, as it were by this among other ways, to ſhew and ſet off the curious make and delicacy of the ear; that by the ſmalleſt undiſcernible difference therein, all the happineſs ariſing from muſick ſhould from ſome be ex-

excluded, whilſt in the generality admitted. This is a ſort of negative proof, that the ear was ſo curiouſly formed for harmony: To which I ſhall add,

2*dly*, A poſitive proof.

For why was the ear formed to diſtinguiſh and to delight in *Concords*, and to be offended and pain'd at *Diſcords*? whence has every *Note* in the aſcent of the muſical Scale, its appropriate *Key*, its ſet or ſeries of companions eſtabliſhed as by Charter; among which ſhould a neighbour *Tone* however harmonious in itſelf and a leader among its own aſſociates; nay, ſhould an *Hemi-tone* by accident or error intervene, it cannot be hid or ſuffered, the whole order of *Chords* from the higheſt to the loweſt, as by univerſal vote, remanding it into ſilence or expulſion? Why are all the eight *Notes*, tho' found unequal and diſproportioned to each other, yet as by parity of claim or efficiency, made eſſential conſtituents in the *Octave*? Laſtly, Whence that technical knowledge of *Flats* and *Sharps*, which like the auxiliary verbs in ſpeech, run thro' every compoſition, and form, if I may ſo ſpeak, the grammar of harmony? Now there is no anſwer nor ſolution to theſe and other difficulties, but only this, that the whole ariſes from, and depends upon the organical formation of the ear. There have been

been * books written concerning the nature, proportions and properties of Sounds; and commentaries upon thoſe books; and † Sects of Philoſophers, great names at this day, that have divided, diſputed and calculated, ſtriving to bring theſe things to a certainty, to ſearch them out unto perfection. But in this whole controverſy or Enquiry, the original judge and ultimate referee is the ear. Now we ask, to what end was ordained this native criticiſm of the ear, ſo accurate, ſo inexplicable? Not, as was hinted, for the attainment or promotion of philoſophy, no nor of oratory, nor of human converſation. For neither in the Schools, nor at the bar, nor at the table, do theſe harmonic curioſities take place or appear. Men diſpute, plead, and converſe, without the uſe or obſervation of theſe, and that with great skill and approbation of the Audience: whereas let the ſame Audience adjourn into the School of Muſick, and immediately every ear expects all that harmonious exactneſs from every inſtrument and voice; the leaſt appearance or affectation whereof, would in the former inſtances be deemed not ſo much abſurdity, as phrenſy.

* Ariſtoxenus, Euclides, &c. Greek *Authors, in number ten, the chief of whom was* C. Ptolemæus, *with* Porphyrius's *Commentaries.*

† *The chief Sects were* Ariſtoxenians *and* Pythagoreans.

3*dly*,

3*dly*. The ear ſeems to be ſo curiouſly formed for the uſe and purpoſes of harmony from hence, becauſe this its inborn criticiſm, and diſtinguiſhing faculty concerning it, may be greatly improved and hightened by art and exerciſe. This proves it to be the original work of nature; which, if it concurs not, oppoſes the ſuperſtructure of Art, and jars againſt its attempts.

There are Maſters in this ſcience that are miracles to their brethren; of ſo determined a genius to muſick, that it can neither be turned from it, nor to any thing beſides: This muſt ariſe from a more exquiſite configuration of the ear. But I ſpeak not here of miracles or rarities, but of nature in its ordinary form or conſtruction.

Now I ſay, the ear, as generally formed, will, by frequenting the ſchool of harmony, and by a ſtudious application refine its faculty, will raiſe its diſcernment into delicacy, ſo as to become like an inſtrument finely ſtrung and tuned, yea, as an univerſal uniſon to all kinds of muſick. To ſuch an one are immediately known and felt all thoſe myſtical beauties, arts and imbelliſhments thereof, which are imperceptible to vulgar ears, and which I know not well how to ſpeak of or repreſent to you in a manner or language ſo be-

coming this place: yet being expedient to the Argument, and not unſuitable to the Audience, a brief deſcription may be born with, or paſſed over.

Now harmony being founded in the combination and concordance of tones or ſounds as the general groundwork, this admits of wondrous variation; which variation may be ſtill multiply'd by the intermixture of *Diſcords*, ſometimes heightned by the agreeable harſhneſs and exaſperation of the bolder, ſometimes relieved and ſweetned by the inſertion and death of the ſofter. Again, through the art of compoſition there is great variety of Parts as well as Notes, which ſometimes are made to draw on and delude the expectation of the ear, by an artificial chaſe, *Fuge*, or circulation; and then returning from theſe grateful excurſions, and reaſſembling they fill all its appetite by the confluence of the *Cords* into an univerſal cloſe. Laſtly, the parts, whether in *Fuge* or *Counterpoint*, generally recommend and ſet off the foregoing by a judicious ſucceſſion; the ſolemnity and gravity of the former being relieved by the chearfulneſs and vivacity of the following; and the briskneſs and levity of theſe again are, as it were, check'd and apologized for by the majeſty of the ſucceeding; and all this greatly beautified as by the nobleneſs or gentleneſs

of the tranſitions, ſo by the interſperſed graces, ſlides or turns of particular notes; I ſay, all theſe beauties of harmony, and many more beyond my knowledge or expreſſion, ariſing from the excellency of the compoſition and performance, which paſs over the ear of the untaught and unskilled without any diſtinction, perception or effect, are to the ear of the Maſter each ſeverally felt, diſtinguiſhed and enjoyed: and ſo are they in part to the ear of every Profeſſor, proportionably to his skill and penetration into the depths of Muſick, into the abyſs of this celeſtial ſcience.

To ſum up theſe teſtimonies: ſince the ear in its ordinary ſtate, and without the leaſt knowledge of harmony, ſuffices, not only for all the common purpoſes, but alſo the greater tranſactions of life, yea, for the attainment of Sciences and Arts; and ſince, as the ear only ſerves in thoſe uſes, ſo it moreover delights in harmony; and that more or leſs, according to the different frame of it, which in ſome is more curiouſly formed than in the generality, as if purpoſely and ſolely made for muſick; and ſince, as in theſe maſters, ſo in moſt others, the ear may be gradually and greatly improved by ſtudy and exerciſe to the finer diſcernment and fuller enjoyment thereof; and ſince in the ways and works of God there is no ſuperfluity, though a ſubor-

ſubordination of uſes; but every creature and every part, member and ſenſe in each, hath its proper and ſuperior end, uſe or office, and delights when exerciſed therein, improves itſelf by that exerciſe, and is more delighted when improved to the greater perfection; hoping for your ſuffrage I cannot but reaſſume my aſſertion, paradoxical as it might appear; and among the manifold uſes of the ear, to place harmony at the top, and to pronounce, that for the improvement and enjoyment thereof this ſenſory was ſo *fearfully and ſo wonderfully made*.

Notwithſtanding this apparent and near relation which harmony bears to the hand and ear, it muſt be confeſſed to be but a ſubordinate relation; both the hand and ear being but inſtruments or conveyances thereof to the ſoul, in which muſt be the foundation of an original and more intimate relation. This relation ſeemed ſo manifeſt to ſome of the antients, that inſtead of a relation they made it its conſtitution; defining the ſoul to be harmony; a definition more excuſable in the rapturous ſchool of Muſick and the Muſes, than defenſible in the ſeverer walks and cloyſters of Philoſophy.

But though neither the antients nor moderns can define or diſcern what the ſoul is in its eſſential form, but only what it

appears to be by its affections and faculties, and by theſe we know it to be created ſpiritual, and for that one reaſon to be above all material ſubſtances *wonderfully made*; but more eſpecially for this reaſon, becauſe it is the inventor and treaſurer of the Sciences and Arts, and of Harmony too among the reſt; yet the ſoul ſeems to bear a more peculiar and intimate relation to Harmony above the reſt. My reaſons are two: The firſt is grounded,

1*ſt*, On the more capacious retention and greater facility of uſe, which the ſoul manifeſts in harmony, than in the other Arts and Sciences.

For whereas the knowledge of thoſe muſt be folded up in the memory with great attention and accuracy of method, or they will be perplexed and ſo loſt; and when they are drawn out for uſe, muſt be taken out with the ſame painful attention and order, or they cannot be applied; what an abundance of harmony, what a multiplicity of muſical tunes may be treaſured, yea heaped up in the ſame ſtorehouſe, without much pains or rules of method; and which when called for, flow out as of themſelves, without Deduction, without præmeditation; and that with infinite variety, and yet with regularity; and though of the neareſt affinity, yet without the leaſt entanglement. So whe-

whether harmony be congenial to the Soul or not, the remembrance and application of it ſeems to be the work, and to have the conſent of nature more, than of any other Science or Art that is manifeſtly acquired. For this ſeems to come naturally and plentifully out of the memory, as out of a fountain; whereas thoſe other kinds of knowledge muſt be drawn out of it, as by force, and a chain of reaſoning, like water out of a well.

But if we paſs from the faculties of the Soul to the affections,

2*dly*, Theſe diſcover a relation to, and dependence on muſick, that is inſeparable and irreſiſtible.

For we find and feel, how by its ſtrange ſympathizing energy, it cauſes love and joy with the dependent train of ſofter affections to paſs through their gradations of warmth and remiſſion, as in a moment. Nay the exceſſes of our paſſions, which are as ſo many evil ſpirits, are ſubject to its power and ejection. For inſtance, when anger or grief have got poſſeſſion of a man, anger attempting to *caſt him as into the fire*, or grief *as into the water*; yet at the command of muſick they have come *out of the man, and left him in his right mind.* The inſtance of *Saul*, in whom the evil ſpirit was under the controul and expulſion of *David*'s harp, has

been often reſembled, and in a manner exemplified in human life, and that through all ages and nations. But whence had muſick this authority from the beginning, over the natures and degrees of human paſſions; ſo as to turn and transform, to cool and comfort, to aſſwage and heal them, as it liſteth, but from nature? And *who gave it this authority*, this medicinal omnipotence, but the author of nature?

Since then the greateſt pleaſures of men ariſe from their paſſions employed on the objects præordained for them; and ſince every affection, beſides the ſeveral enjoyment of its proper object, doth univerſally delight in harmony, as the common object, enjoyment or relief of all; ſince this by its addition quickens and multiplies all other enjoyments, and deadens or diſperſes every adverſity; though I am far from affirming, that the Soul is or was made for harmony; yet I cannot affirm leſs, than that harmony was ordained for man, yea, for the chief among the delights ordained for the ſons of men.

And according to this ordinance of nature hath it been made a conſtant attendant in the greateſt ſcenes of pleaſure, in kings courts, and in the palaces of the mighty. No leſs hath it born a principal part in Theaters, thoſe fictitious ſcenes of pleaſure, from their firſt inſtitution; being

ing introduced throughout thoſe entertainments to change the *Scenes*, and connect the *Acts*, without which they would have been either inſipid or inſupportable. What would *Tragedy*, ancient or modern, be but dull cruelty, without the ſoftening and mitigation of the ſongs and interludes? and without their exaltation and ornament, *Comedy* would be but low life in fiction, and often appear under the degeneracy of *Farce*. Nay, what at preſent ſuperſede both, our *Operas*; what are theſe but a collection of choſen harmony, a concatenation of Songs; which, tho' compoſed in an unknown tongue, connected by an unnatural * chaunt, upbraided for their irrational half repetition, and for the general futility of the ſubject and ſenſe, notwithſtanding theſe defects, are for the ſake of the harmony, the continued and cardinal entertainments of our Princes, our Nobles, and the chief of our *Iſrael*.

For the ſame and higher reaſons hath muſick been admitted into conſecrated places, into the courts of the living God, to miniſter before the altars of the Moſt-high, and this under the Legal and Evangelical diſpenſation. Under the Legal, even when the Tabernacle might be ſaid to be in its pilgrimage, it was *well ſeen, how the God of Iſrael* upon ſolemn occa-

* Recitative.

ſions † *went in the ſanctuary; the ſingers went before, and players on inſtruments followed after.* But when it came to mount *Sion*, and was tranſlated, or rather transfigured into the Temple, it was better ſeen how God went, and indeed dwelt in his Sanctuary in a more glorious manner; the *Levites* || and Prieſts according to their daily courſes, the *Levites* with cymbals, pſalteries and harps, the Prieſts with trumpets, *miniſtring continually before the ark of the covenant.* In the annals of the Church it is recorded, in what manner, and with what order of ſingers the primitive age gave thanks unto God in his holy places: which being afterwards enlarged and eſtabliſhed through the Empire, the Chriſtian worſhip of courſe was gradually improved, and ſoon beautified, by the erection of Choirs, compoſed of Prieſts and Deacons, with others, who miniſtred before the altar with ſinging and muſical inſtruments; above all the *Organ*, at length conſecrated to be the comprehenſive muſical inſtrument of God, as containing the epitome and excellence of all.

The ſtrange objections againſt the uſe of muſick in Churches, invented in theſe latter times, could in the Primitive have no poſſible plea or pretence, either from *Jew*

† Pſal. lxviii. 24, 25. || 1 Chron. xvi. 4, 5, 6.

or

or *Gentile*. The *Jewiſh* Converts could not raiſe that unnatural objection againſt it, that it had been a *Jewiſh* uſage: neither could the *Gentile* Converts as unnaturally cry out, that it had been a Pagan rite. For muſick had been as univerſally uſed alſo among the *Gentiles*, being an ornament and cover to their idolatries: the Governments of moſt nations cauſing their people, *at what time they heard the ſound of the flute, ſackbut, dulcimer, and all kinds of muſick, to fall down and worſhip the images they had ſet up.* No; the continuation of muſick in the Chriſtian Church, was, and muſt ever be rather an invitation to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and all unbelievers, to come into its communion; the inclination of nature, and the love of uſage, that ſecond nature, concurring in them to verify that prophecy, that in that day *they ſhould* * *come to Sion with ſinging, and joy ſhould be upon their head.*

Thus then as in Courts and Theaters, ſingers and muſical inſtruments of all ſorts, have been admitted and uſed for the *delights of the ſons of men*; ſo have they been alſo in Temples and Choirs, but then for the delights of the ſons of God.

Here I cannot but obſerve to you, the power which Religion hath over all per-

* Iſa. li. 11.

ſons

ſons and things, and even over harmony itſelf; ſo as by its union or abſence proportionably to affect it, either to increaſe or evacuate its force, and to double or diſſipate its delight. For we know, there are many lovers and admirers of it, that nevertheleſs have little love or admiration for Church-muſick; it becomes to them a dull, dead entertainment, another thing. Part of this alteration may come from nature, part from the force of cuſtom. There are perſons of that airy nature and diſpoſition, as to be ſmitten only with the moſt light ludicrous airs of the Theatre; nay, more with the offcaſts, extravagances and intended foils of the Compoſer, than with his moſt ſtudied and auguſt *adagios*. I ſpeak not of theſe, but even of ſuch who ſit as maſter-auditors in Theatres, whoſe ears examine, enjoy, and exhauſt the wonders of the beſt compoſition; theſe theatrical Judges, I ſay, ſhall in our Temples ſit as foreigners, as hardly underſtanding and leſs enjoying the beſt Choral performances; the *ſongs of Sion are ſung* to ſuch, as *in a ſtrange land*.

I own there is and ought to be a great difference, an eſſential diſparity between the compoſitions formed for the Stage and for the Sanctuary. And the force of cuſtom in our different attendance on them, too often on the one, and too ſeldom on

the other, may create in our reliſh of them an additional diſparity. But yet I take the freedom to aſcribe this difference and deficiency of reliſh to Church-muſick partly to an higher, a worſe cauſe, a defect and deadneſs in religion. For religious perſons can enjoy both in their place and proportion. With theſe too the Theatre has its ſeaſons and pleaſures as well as the Temple; but then the greater becauſe of the Temple, and where that has the greateſt.

On the reverſe, the man of pleaſures, that has no religion in life or thought, *ſavoureth not the things that be of God*, much leſs thoſe that paſs in his houſe: He underſtands not, taſts not, the moſt conſummate anthems or ſeraphic hymns, they are rather fooliſhneſs to him, irreconcileable to his judgment and ear; and no marvel, the cauſe being both natural and judicial. For,

1*ſt*, Vice by its natural venom depraves and deadens human reliſh to all things: the intellect and appetite of man grow ſtupid and callous through carnality: and in a litteral ſenſe, the heart of the ſenſualiſt *waxes groſs, and his ear dull of hearing*; ſo that ſuch an one is ſhut up to an half-reliſh of all things, even of his theatrical entertainments. But yet, if through the force of education, underſtanding, or o-

ther

ther reſtraint, ſuch a man keeps himſelf free from the natural ſtupefactions of vice, living a ſober and welbred heathen; yet being a heathen, his irreligion will fix a judicial *diſcord* at the heart, which will cauſe it to tremble and be diſquieted at the ſound of things Divine.

This is the undoubted cauſe of the diſtaſte and diſſonancy of ſacred harmony to ſome ears, which holds as ſtrong againſt the admiſſion and entertainment of ſacred truth: unhappy auditors, who *refuſe to hear the voice of the charmer* in either way, *charm he never ſo wiſely*. Let not ſuch be auditors; let them wiſely keep off from the ſound of the doctrine and muſick of the holy place. Such only, *as have ears to hear, let them hear*.

I will not here repeat or recapitulate what in a former * Diſcourſe upon this occaſion I have enlarged upon, namely, The great uſefulneſs of muſick in the celebration of public worſhip, nor explain and juſtify the particular uſages thereof in our Choral Service, as it is accompanied with *plain ſong*, termed † *Chaunting*, and in ſome parts

* *Preach'd*, Septemb. 7. 1720. *Entitled*, A RATIONALE on Cathedral worſhip, or Choir-ſervice.

† *For which uſage I have given diverſe reaſons in my former Sermon. The ancient uſe of it in our Old* Engliſh, *or* Anglo-Saxon *Church, appears from two remarkable evidences: one is from* Ælfrick's *Canons to Biſhop* Walſin: *where giving orders to*

parts with ſinging and muſical inſtruments; which things are laid down and vindicated in that brief RATIONALE. I will only, from what has been now ſaid upon this ſubject, or the contemplation of the natural cauſes and efficients of harmony, add one reflection concerning the wonderful operations of the Maker of us, and of all things that affect us or our ſenſes; that it ſhould pleaſe him from things inſenſible, from dead inſtruments, a piece of wood, metal, or ſtring, to raiſe in our ſouls ſuch an intenſeneſs of delight.

Let us conſider this firſt in the objects of Sight, that other noble Senſe, a juſt competitor with the Senſe of Hearing in dignity, if not delight. For behold how beautiful is the world about us! How ini-

to Presbyters to keep conſecrated oil and anoint the ſick, founded on St. James; *thoſe words of the Apoſtle, and* let them pray over him, *are thus tranſlated,* hi him oꝼeꝼ ꝛinȝon, *i. e.* they ſhall ſing over him. *Ælf. Can.* 32. *Spelman* Vol. I. p. 580.

The other is from a Conſtitution of King Canutus, *about* A. C. 1032. *in which he commands that every Chriſtian be taught his* Pater-Noſter *and* Credo; *it is ſaid,* Cꝼiꝛt ꝛea'ꝼ ꝛanȝe Pateꝼ Noꝛteꝼ æꝼoꝛt: *i. e. Chriſt himſelf firſt ſang* Pater-Noſter. *Canut. Eccleſ. Leg. L.* 22. *Spelm. C. V.* 1. p. 549.

To which I will add an obſervation relating to the old Britiſh *Church, made by a learned friend, from the* Welſh *Laws: That in the Prince's Family the Domeſtic Chaplain* (offeiriad Teulu) *was obliged,* Canu Pader, *i. e. literally* to Chaunt Pater-Noſter *before his Maſter. That was his office; under which is comprehended his duty of reading prayers in the Court.*

mitable

mitable this landſcape of nature, laid out and painted in ſuch variety of colours! Yet all this beautiful colouring is not in the things themſelves; for that is changeable by the poſition of the eye, every colour varying its ſhade, as the thing beheld, or the beholder varies his ſituation. The bow in the clouds, the feathers on birds, the ſcales on fiſhes, yea, the ſilks on our ſelves, prove this philoſophic truth, and daily give the experiment. Neither are the colours in the eye. For were there any one colour in the eye, as ſometimes the tincture of the Jaundice, the ſame colouring would be ſpread over all things. What or whence then this glorious diverſity of objects around us? Why all this is formed within us. Theſe colourings are only different ſenſations raiſed in the ſoul, by the different reflections of light from thoſe objects, collected and conveyed through the eye, as through a tranſparent perſpective, to the *retina*, a curious network of nerves, formed and ordained to convey theſe reflections and motions of light to the brain, as the preſence-room of the ſoul. So that whilſt I am forced thus to ſpeak as a Philoſopher, I may ſpeak alſo like a Preacher; that the external face of nature is nothing but a diverſity of naked, rugged ſurfaces; and all this its *glorious apparel, wrought about*

with

with diverſe colours, is the direct workmanſhip of God in us, who from theſe material objects, and the reflections of light from them, works in us to ſee, all we ſee about us, and with the ſight whereof we are ſo greatly bleſſed and delighted.

And thus it is in harmony: the muſick is not in the inſtrument, nor in the ear. Only the ſtroke or motion of the inſtrument cauſing a correſpondent motion or undulation in the air, and this ſtriking on the ear, and thence the' *auditory* nerves, doth by the law or word of the Creator, raiſe thoſe delightful ſenſations in the Soul, we call ſounds. The inſtruments and their furniture, we ſee, are mere matter, wood, metal, or ſtring, the work of the craftſman; which neither feel, nor hear, nor of themſelves move nor ſend forth any ſound. And the ear, though it ſeems to hear, and is the work of the Divine artificer, is ſtill but an inſtrument; and though of finer texture and materials than the former, is in itſelf altogether as inſenſible. But by the co-operation of both theſe inſtruments, natural and artificial, God works in us to hear all we hear and enjoy in muſick. *Oh Lord! how wonderful are thy works*, and thy continued workmanſhip by their ſervice in and to us men, and for our delight!

That

That by the reciprocal motions or trembliings of a ſtring or pipe, which we call vibrations, and by the inequality, proportion or coincidence of their number, all the innumerable tones in muſick, with their ſubdiviſions, with their diſcords and ſymphonies, ſhould take their original. That when the ſeveral inſtruments in conſort do by an equal number of vibrations make one ſound or uniſon; yet that each inſtrument ſhould have its particular ſound, and as it were, its own voice; even in equality cauſing a variety: and all this for the delights of the ſons of men.

Oh! that men would therefore praiſe him for this *his goodneſs* upon this ſuitable occaſion, *and declare the wonders*, which in the inſtitution of harmony, and the formation of the objects and inſtruments in ſubſervience to its enjoyment, I ſay, declare aloud the wonders *that he doth for the children of men!* yea let the heavens, the lofty original pattern of harmony, diſplayed in their creation, and declared in their revolutions; let the Sun, with the Planets, that myſtical Lyre of *Apollo* with ſeven chords; let the Stars above, let the earth beneath; let every creature that moveth, praiſe him in their dances; let every thing that ſoundeth praiſe him in their ſongs; *let every thing that hath breath*,

breath, but us men above all creatures, *praiſe the Lord.*

I cannot reſt under this contemplation, without extending it to our future happineſs. For as I believe, and have reaſons ſo to do from the repreſentations of Scripture, that harmony will be an ingredient, ſurely no ſmall one, in the enjoyments of the life to come; ſo I am emboldened in this belief, from the former meditations on its nature, end, and cauſes. For ſince God has created harmony for our delight on earth, and has made it ſo great and raviſhing, ſo ſuperior to all other ſenſible gratifications, whilſt we enjoy it only through theſe groſs ſenſes, and from theſe coarſe inſtruments; when theſe our ſenſes ſhall be ſpiritualized and enlarged, and theſe poor material inſtruments of human invention, ſhall be exchanged for the golden harps of Angels, and trumpet of Archangels; whither will this harmony lift us; ſince the thoughts almoſt lift us up into, and anticipate Paradiſe. Our preſent muſick in its perfection, as all things then paſſed, will appear contemptible, like the ſinging or noiſe of children and birds. Our whole *Scale* of it is now ſhut up in the return of a few *Octaves*, beyond which boundaries above or below, our inſtruments cannot form a tone, nor our ears receive it. Beſides, our moſt ca-

pacious inſtruments are overcharged, and our moſt maſterly hands embaraſſed, by a ſmall variety of Strings. But hereafter, when the ſenſe of hearing ſhall, as I ſaid, be greatly enlarged in extent and diſtinction of capacity, and our hands ſhall be more *wonderfully made*, enjoying the promiſe of an angelical activity, even *as a flame of fire*; why may not the celeſtial GAMUT be made to deſcend and aſcend in a cycle, incluſive of an hundred *Octaves*, in an unbounded and increaſing extenſion? And what an inexpreſſible harmony from the combination and conſonance of *cords*, ſo infinitely diſtant?

Again, when the materials of the heavenly inſtruments ſhall be in proportion exquiſite, and the forms of them the art and workmanſhip of Seraphs; the tones of them will doubtleſs be ſuch, ſo melodious, that the ſtroke of a ſingle Viol will far exceed the beſt conſort of our theaters, or the moſt extatic Hallelujahs of the Choirs below.

Add to the excellency the variety of thoſe inſtruments; for ſurely as in heaven there will be muſical inſtruments, all then muſical inſtruments of God, ſo that of all ſorts.

Laſtly, As there will be diverſity of inſtruments, ſo of voices. For though we *ſhall be as the Angels*, elevated far above

the enjoyments and neceſſities calculated for this mortal ſtate, eating, drinking, marriage; yet doubt we not but there will be ſinging-men and ſinging-women, and even infants, out of whoſe mouths God *here perfected praiſe:* all theſe ſaints and ſervants of God may be conſtituted to make up the heavenly Choir, having harps in their hands, and their parts appointed in the ſong to the Lamb, according to their order or inſtalment in the celeſtial Temple.

In that day we may hope to be let farther into the ſecrets and ſympathy of harmony, among the reſt into that myſtic property; why * "all ſounds that can "be poſſibly joined together at once in "muſical concordance, have been obſer-"ved to be contained in the return of "*Thirds*, or the reiterated harmony in "three". Which I only mention, in that no obſervation or emblem ſhould be neglected, that ſerves to remind us of the Ever-bleſſed Trinity in Unity; before whoſe throne above, the worſhip day and night is the *Triſagium* reiterated, the hymn, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, repeated for ever. O bleſſed day to all ſuch as ſhall be admitted into the fruition and audience of theſe things! which ſeeing *ear hath not heard*, it cannot therefore *enter into the heart of man to conceive* or deſcribe. And though

* *See Mr.* Playford's *Introduction, &c. Preface.*

we are exhorted to think and talk of theſe things as ſubjects of our hope, yet our conception about them can be but poor conjecture, and our deſcription a vaſt, though venial, degradation to them.

In this preference and exaltation of the delights of Muſick, I have not entered into a compariſon with the delights that ariſe from contemplation and knowledge; which muſt be owned to be far ſuperior in extent and dignity of ſubject and degree. Know we not men, and thoſe the chief among men, that have made the knowledge of Nature their delight, and had rather know but in part, and that *as through a glaſs darkly*, than enjoy the whole of the creation? The knowledge only of the heavens, or to indulge the dialect of the day, the harmony of the ſpheres; which though as to the ſending forth any ſound is a fiction, yet as to the obſerving * harmonic proportions in their diſtances and periods, is a ſurpriſing truth; I ſay, the knowledge of this our Planetary Syſtem, from the centre to the circumference, gives the mind an idea ſo grand, ſo entertaining, ſo aſtoniſhing; that as it repreſents this Earth but as a little ſpot, ſo does it all its delights under an equal diminution: nay, the theory or ſpeculative ſcience of Muſick has its wondrous ſatisfaction, where-

* Ptolem. *Lib.* iii. *Cap.* 8. Gregorii Aſtron. Præfat.

with

with it hath engaged the greateſt wits, ancient and † modern, by writing, by arguments, by experiments, to labour and ſearch after it as for hid treaſure: and no doubt but *Ptolemy* had his great delights, yea greater than *Corelli*.

But then the delights ariſing from the knowledge in this or any other ſciences, are not, nor can be termed the *delights of the ſons of men*. For are all Philoſophers? are all Aſtronomers? have all the gift of Mathematicks, which alone have the keys, that let us into every ſchool and laboratory of Nature? Beſides, as theſe delights are communicable but to few, ſo are they in their kind intellectual; whereas Muſick, as we have treated of it, vocal and inſtrumental, is ranked among, though at the top of ſenſible enjoyments; and which being conveyed through the ſenſes, may in ſome degree be communicated to all.

However, from this reflection I may obſerve, that the Sciences themſelves have been always figured out, and repreſented to mankind with muſical inſtruments in their hand, and that of all ſorts. Which as it ſerves to denote the peculiar province and profeſſion of each Science, and the

† Zarlinus, Salinas, Merſennus, Kepler, Cartes, Huigens; *but above all our Dr.* Wallis, *as appears by his Appendix to* Ptolemy's *Harmonicks, eſteemed by all, particularly Dr.* Aldrich, *a maſterpiece of Criticiſm.*

general concord and conſonancy of all; every ſcience, like our Choral *Antiphons*, anſwering to, and confirming the ſound, the ſayings and truths of another; ſo it ſerves alſo to typify, that the greatneſs of the delights ariſing from the knowledge of the Sciences, could not be expreſſed, or better expreſſed than by thoſe of harmony. So then, by this typical acknowledgment and verdict of the Sciences, in all things the beſt judges, Muſick is owned to be the leading and exemplary *delight of the ſons of men.*

From the ſubject of Harmony I more gladly paſs to that of Charity, as getting more into my province and knowledge, and within the limits and language of my profeſſion. It was indeed the recommendation of this, that prevailed upon, yea, compelled me, which nothing elſe ſhould have done, thus to hazard your good will, as well as ſtrain upon your patience, by detaining you with this ſecondary collection, not to ſay gleaning of my thoughts upon this ſo deſerving a ſubject. But the perſonal diſadvantage and diminution I may undergo, will be overbalanced to me, if I can in any degree recommend this new and bleſſed * work of Charity to your further

* *The purport of it is, for the placing out the children of the poorer Clergy, belonging to the Dioceſes of* Glocester, Worceſte

further approbation, or to the equal favour it was bleſſed with in the two former inſtances. The reaſons, objects and end of it, though ye are not ſtrangers to, yet I muſt further treſpaſs upon your patience, whilſt I enlarge upon them with a brief exhortation.

Let us, my Brethren, conſider this propoſed work of Charity, and its effect or influence with reſpect to God, to the world, to the receivers, and to the givers.

1*ſt*, With reſpect to God, and his holy religion.

We know, it has been the cuſtom and order of the Church, that all its ſolemn meetings ſhould be accompanied with acts of charity: for which reaſon the poors Box or Cheſt, ſtood anciently near the

ceſter *and* Hereford, *or of the members belonging to the three reſpective Choirs.*

To be equally divided and diſpoſed of by ſix Stewards, two for each Dioceſe, a Clergyman and Gentleman, members of the Society, and the account to be entred at the annual meeting.

Having firſt propoſed this Charity with ſucceſs at Gloceſter, 1724, *and recommended it at* Worceſter, 1725, *I thought my ſelf obliged to promote it in this way, in the Church and Dioceſe to which I belong.*

The firſt Collection amounted to 32 l. *the two laſt to* 50 l. *a ſum ſufficient to place out three children annually, which has been accordingly done.*

The time of meeting is the firſt Tueſday *in* September, *on* Wedneſday *is a Sermon, on* Thurſday Purcel's Te Deum *performed with inſtruments as are the Anthems on both days. The two evenings there are public Conſorts for the Gentry.*

altars * or doors of our Churches; into which every one on the Lord's-day caſt *what he had laid by in ſtore, according as God had proſpered him* in his weekly labours. It were to be wiſhed, that the ſame were continued in our Churches, as they are in many, and † enjoyned in all, as uſeful remembrancers of ancient piety, if not receivers of the preſent. But then all Feſtivals, ſtated or occaſional, among which might this ~~act~~ Anniverſary inſert or ſhelter its name, had a peculiar claim to a charitable communication of our worldly goods to the poorer brethren. For how could the Church, the body, rejoice, unleſs all *the members rejoiced with it?*

Farther, if we conſider alſo perſons as well as times, that have relation to God, this our Aſſembly being chiefly compoſed, or ſuppoſed to be of Eccleſiaſticks, of ſuch as belong to, and are appointed to miniſter before the Ark of the Lord, as *David*'s Choir was, *to record, to thank, and to praiſe the Lord God of Iſrael*; it becomes us, with regard to our ſtation and office at all times, but eſpecially upon this publick occaſion, to promote, and to provoke unto good works, and that not for the example only, but advantage; that ſo by the aſcending energy of pray-

* Edw. VI. Injunct. † Can. 64.

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ers and alms in conjunction, this our meeting may firſt of all, and above all be ſanctified and accepted in God's ſight. We doubt not but it hath been, and is accepted before God, it being ordained to promote the honour, beauty and delight of his holy ſervice, and brotherly love and concord among them that miniſter therein. But the incenſe of Charity, we are aſſured, will to theſe religious acts and ends, ſtill add *a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour*. Now if God accepts and juſtifies, who is he that condemns? However, with reſpect to the world, too prone to condemn,

2dly, This Charity will be moſt effectual to render it accepted in the ſight and opinion of men.

It is no ſmall teſtimony of its acceptance hitherto, that it has been favoured with ſo univerſal a confluence and countenance by perſons of diſtinction and eſteem among us, and *by the honourable not a few*. But this, which is our advantage and glory, and which brings this our aſſembling out into the eye and obſervation of the world, we may expect, will in proportion awaken and provoke the adverſary to obſerve too, if any thing amiſs may be found among us; if any thing appears which may be diſcoloured or diſtorted

ſtorted either into a blemiſh or diſadvantage. Since then this our fraternal Meeting could not be hid, nor celebrated among our ſelves without a publick participation, it became us in ſome publick way, (and what way ſo becoming, as ſome work of religion?) to endeavour to make it ſhine forth annually among men.

As to what paſſeth here in the houſe of God, our celebration of the publick worſhip, with the muſical inſtruments of God, what but profeſſed impiety can arraign? What except brute inſenſibility but muſt applaud? And as to the publick entertainment of muſick that is elſewhere given, it being an innocent and grateful acknowledgment, in return to the favour and countenance that is ſhewn to our pious and laudable deſign, *viz.* as I ſaid, to promote muſick in our Choirs, and unity among the members, what but ill-nature averſe to gratitude, friendſhip, and ſociety, what but inhumanity can carp or mock at? However a publick Charity ſuperadded, as it compleats and crowns the excellency of our worſhip, ſo it juſtifies the propriety, not to ſay the civility of that muſical entertainment.

But farther, as this tends to guard our Meeting, or rather SOCIETY, from external malignity ariſing from an evil eye, and evil tongue; which like the *Harpyes* feigned

feigned of old, watch and hover o're all that is innocent and excellent, to defile or deſtroy it; ſo what is more,

3*dly*, It tends to preſerve it from any inward taint or breeding of corruption.

Charity is that ſymbolical ſalt, where-with *every* Evangelical *ſacrifice ought to be ſalted.* And where this ſacred ſpecific enters, that body is encloſed and enſured from putrefaction. This ſpecific or preventive is ſupernatural, operating by the Divine bleſſing, cauſing it to deſcend upon, and encompaſs this our meeting, both within and without this holy place. By this bleſſing none, or fewer of thoſe indecencies and irregularities ſhall be ſuffered to appear here in this numerous Aſſembly, which are too apt, upon the like occaſions, to break in and blemiſh the publick worſhip, by turning the houſe of prayer into a market-place, and the Congregation into a croud. By the ſame holy guard alſo, no criminal liberties elſewhere, no intemperance, no quarrelling, no riot, no intreigue, none of theſe ſpots ſhall be permitted to creep into this our Feaſt, being a Feaſt of Charity, ſo as to ſully and unſettle its preſent reputation, which this good work has much increaſed, and by its preſent ſucceſs may eſtabliſh. It was indeed in juſt eſteem before, and enjoyed a good

good and growing report: but *yet one thing it* ſeemingly *lacked*; which was *to give to the poor*. But to what poor? The choice of the objects will ſtill add to the reputation of our Charity, and exalt it into the title and dignity of piety; as implicitly given to the altar, being given to the off-ſpring of them who wait at the altar. Let us then,

3*dly*, Conſider the receivers of your bounty, recommended to you.

As we do not in this Collection ask or propound great matters, ſo in the diſtribution we cannot extend it to the multitude of the common poor. For then it *would not ſuffice, that every one of them might take a little*. Beſides, in that promiſcuous number as many idle lurk, that will not work, undeſerving all charity; ſo thoſe many aged therein, who cannot work, and therefore deſerving objects, are provided for by the Publick. Yet this relief of the aged, though a Chriſtian as well as Legal duty, is in the effect no other, than pouring water on what is decayed and withering away, only to preſerve life. But we propound with what we receive, to plant and water young roots; each of which, if God *gives the increaſe*, may grow up into a great tree. By this method your gift alſo will obtain a multiplying

ing virtue, and your mite may grow up into a talent.

Neither do we chuſe theſe plants out of the common field, but out of a ſacred incloſure, the Tribe dedicated to God. There is an anniverſary proviſion of this kind from the Corporation above, which extends its beneficence to many, to the annual apprenticing of twenty or thirty of theſe children of our Brethren. But it cannot reach unto all, nor ſearch out all. As a ſmall ſupplement to this great exemplar, the annual proviſion for one ſuch object in each Diviſion, is what we have accompliſh'd by your former bounty, and hope we may continue by your future.

I will not, indeed I cannot enlarge upon the peculiar merits of theſe Objects; the reflection thereon being a pain and grief to my ſelf, the repreſentation thereof might be an unſeaſonable alloy to this our joyous ſolemnity: And I am perſuaded unneceſſary to moſt here, who by being here, not to mention other Teſtimonies, partly ſhew themſelves lovers of our *Sion*, and the ſons thereof. As all ſuch will agree, that theſe children are very fit objects of compaſſion, ſo likewiſe that they are the fitteſt for us Clergy to propoſe and recommend.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, as to the Givers, let me ſpeak a few words concerning the work it ſelf, and the peculiar and precious promiſes annexed to it.

What more comfortable words can we ſinners hear, than what St. *Peter* ſaith, that * *charity ſhall cover the multitude of ſins*; the multitude, the univerſality, the infinity of ſins. And ſuch a multitude we all have of thoſe ſins, which charity has the promiſe to cover, ſins of infirmity, committed through ignorance, miſtake, ſurreption, frailty; or as ſumm'd up in our Litany, "negligences and ig-"norances." In theſe *who* † *can tell how oft he offendeth?* Theſe Charity is ſaid to cover. But how cover? ſo as to cancel the penalty, or cleanſe from the guilt by any virtual efficiency? No: did a man give all his goods to feed or educate theſe poor, did he found another CORPORATION FOR THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF THE POORER CLERGY, not only equal to the preſent, but to the ſupply of all the objects of either ſort, that are or ſhall ariſe; even an endowment anſwerable to that calamitous demand, would not be able thus to cover the leaſt Sin. No: 'tis thou, O Lord, who alone *muſt cleanſe us from theſe ſecret faults*; and that through

* 1 Pet. iv. 8. † Pſal. xix. 12.

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the merits and mercies of Jeſus Chriſt laid hold on by faith and repentance. But this is the bleſſed advantage of charity, that being joined with faith and prayer, it will induce our merciful God to accept of a general repentance for this multitude of ſins. And as for ſins of a greater magnitude and provocation, which require a particular and ſtrict repentance, even here charity may interpoſe its peculiar prevalence, ſo as to induce God to vouchſafe the means of grace, outward and inward, of making ſuch repentance; which means, the greateſt of mercies, ſhall not be extended to unmerciful men, whoſe natural hardneſs of heart God may ſuffer to be more hardened, and to be overgrown with the penal hardneſs of impenitence. *Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy,*

There is a kind of analogy and repreſentation between the acts of man's charity and God's mercy. And ſince it is the rule in the Divine juſtice to repay vengeance to ſinners *in ſpecie*, ſin for ſin, blood for blood; ſo why may not the ſame be obſerved in the retributions of mercy? Thus what is given to this education, or other inſtruction of the ignorant, may it not be a memorial before God, inducing him to cover the ſins of ignorance; what to the reduction of the erro-

erroneous, to pass by our mistakes; what to the comfort or recovery of the sick and needy, to heal our infirmities; what to the cloathing of the naked, to veile our nakedness, our sins from shame, our follies from reproach? I cannot but think, that God doth and will shew mercy to them that have shewn mercy, also in kind, or according to the method, objects, I had almost said patterns, though small and undeserving, which they themselves have set in the exemplification of their mercies to others.

But I would chuse at this time rather to recommend charity to you, not as sinners; but as stewards, in that as it will be available through a general repentance to cover the multitude of infirmities, so likewise of extravagancies; I mean expences upon our selves, upon our pleasures and vanities, of which we can give either no account, or a bad one. Of such waste and imbezelment of our fortunes, which are our talents, is there not also a multitude, beyond remembrance, beyond recovery? And 'tis charity if any thing, we may hope must through Christ's mercy, cover also this multitude, must discount this immemorial plurality.

But we cannot hope this, unless in the course of our expences, Charity be allowed

lowed to have its conſtant place and dividend. I ſpeak to the high and low, to the great and inferior ranks: to the great, that among the dignities of their domeſtick ſtate, the magnificence of their dwellings, the hoſpitality of their tables, the richneſs of furniture, the changes of raiment, the train of equipage, among theſe allowed and allowable expences upon their perſonal felicity, Charity ſhould claim alſo her allowance, ſhould ſend in her weekly demands and debentures into the treaſury of their incomes; and not be ſuffered to wait at the door, or ſent away empty, or with a trifle, as a penſioner or beggar. The ſame regard ſhould it claim and receive from all the inferior eſtates of men, and that proportioned to their expence, perſonal and domeſtick.

Conſider the innocent pleaſures and entertainments, ſo called, common to the generality of the world, wherein as few deny themſelves, ſo neither we truſt does God deny them, are they not commonly expenſive? To mention the chief, namely the Theatrical entertainments allowed in our Capital City, and which when not innocent, ought not to be allowed, how few perſons deny themſelves the expence of attending them, though conſiderable; or do it *grudgingly*, *and as of neceſſity?* Theſe return weekly and daily, and the

expence returns. If the attendants on thoſe diverſions think fit therein to allow themſelves without the exceſs of fondneſs or frequency, who is he that ſhall condemn them? But then, we ſay, let their diſburſements upon charitable occaſions keep an even pace, and in ſome due proportion; or there will be one, that will condemn, will bring theſe things, unleſs repented of, to a melancholy balance at the final Audit.

This our Entertainment, if it may deſcend to that ſecondary and inferior appellation, being of a nobler kind, a religious nature, returns but annually. An annual tribute, proportioned to what God has bleſſed every attendant, is all that is requeſted. Nay, even the tythe, the tenth part of that expence, which probably each will undergo to reap this enjoyment, and which each muſt allow to be the beſt part of that expence, being like the tenth alſo dedicated to God; is this too much, an unreaſonable requeſt or expectation? But I will neither ask nor add more; leſt this being a voluntary contribution, a freewill offering, by anticipation I may limit the will, and leſſen the work.

Ye then that are wellwiſhers to our *Sion*, and to the continuance and proſperity of our Choirs, which were inſti-

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tuted for the exaltation of its holy worſhip; and who are no leſs wellwiſhers to this our anniverſary Meeting, which was appointed for the furtherance of that inſtitution; be ye aſſured, that ye cannot better demonſtrate your good will, nor promote your wiſhes, than by joining in this charitable work of ours; which, as has been ſhewn, will ſanctify and ſtrengthen it in the favour of God; will ſweeten and ſeaſon it ſo, as to give it a general good ſavour and acceptance in the judgment and fame of the world; preſerving it from inward corruption, and thereby from any juſt outward objection.

Conſider the objects recommended, that your bounty will be given, not to the bare ſuſtentation of life, as in the aged or ſick, but to the education of youth; which being of a growing nature, the extent and multiplication thereof may be *thirty, ſixty, or an hundred fold.* Conſider alſo, that in acts of Charity, who or whatever be the objects, ye really give not only to them, but to your ſelves. The effect of your gift, whatever it proves to thoſe objects, will deſcend upon your ſelves, to the covering through Chriſt's mercy, the infirmities of your lives, and miſmanagement of your talents. Conſider laſtly, that whoever be the objects,

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direct or conſequential, others or your ſelves; yet that in the preſentation here made, your gift is an offering, given and dedicated to God; to that God, who as he hath given, and doth daily give to every one of us; though *he upbraideth not* the illiberal among us, yet he commendeth the liberal, yea, he *loveth a cheerful giver:* and will reward him in proportion to the will, and not the work, with his everlaſting love.

FINIS.

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